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SUBJECT: EL SALVADOR PREPARES FOR THE CONFERENCE OF FIRST
LADIES OF THE AMERICAS

¶1. (SBU) El Salvador will host the 14th Conference of the First Ladies, Spouses and Representatives of Heads of State and Government of the Americas in San Salvador November 19-21, 2007. The Conference theme is "Building a Society for All Ages," and the proceedings will focus on aging and the particular challenges faced by elderly women.

¶2. (SBU) Poloffs represented the U.S. at the first technical preparatory meeting for the Conference in San Salvador, in July 2007. The meeting brought together representatives from 17 countries of the Americas (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, United States and Peru). Participants discussed the Declaration of San Salvador, which will be ratified during the November Conference.

¶3. (SBU) The technical preparatory meeting covered a wide range of themes elaborated in the Declaration of San Salvador and a "Plan of Action." The Declaration builds on earlier efforts, such as the 2002 Madrid Plan of Action, that sought to develop international strategies to address aging issues and eliminate discrimination. While there were some points of contention, the representatives were able to reach consensus on HIV/AIDS prevention and the role of women in the Americas.

¶4. (SBU) The Conference in November will adopt the Declaration and Plan of Action agreed upon in July. The majority of the 34 countries of the Americas have confirmed their plans to attend the November Conference. The Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, the Conference's special guest, will be making a presentation on microfinance.

¶5. (SBU) Post suggests that the First Lady consider attending the conference. FLOTUS participation would show support for the GOES, our only ally in the hemisphere with troops in Iraq, and highlight US commitment to the Americas.

¶6. (SBU) Post has e-mailed English and Spanish copies of the draft Declaration of San Salvador to WHA/CEN.
Glazer